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NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE AND FEE(S) DUE

28289 7590 07/27/2009

THE WEBB LAW FIRM, P.C.
700 KOPPERS BUILDING
436 SEVENTH AVENUE
PITTSBURGH, PA 15219

EXAMINER

FIGUEROA, ADRIANA

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3633

DATE MAILED: 07/27/2009

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|---|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/561,106 | 12/16/2005 | Franz Knauseder | 1469-053129 | 1988 |
| TITLE OF INVENTION: PANELS COMPRISING INTERLOCKING SNAP-IN PROFILES | | | | |

| APPLN. TYPE | SMALL ENTITY | ISSUE FEE DUE | PUBLICATION FEE DUE | PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE | TOTAL FEE(S) DUE | DATE DUE |
|----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------|
| nonprovisional | NO | \$1510 | \$300 | \$0 | \$1810 | 10/27/2009 |

THE APPLICATION IDENTIFIED ABOVE HAS BEEN EXAMINED AND IS ALLOWED FOR ISSUANCE AS A PATENT. **PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS CLOSED.** THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. THIS APPLICATION IS SUBJECT TO WITHDRAWAL FROM ISSUE AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE OFFICE OR UPON PETITION BY THE APPLICANT. SEE 37 CFR 1.313 AND MPEP 1308.

THE ISSUE FEE AND PUBLICATION FEE (IF REQUIRED) MUST BE PAID WITHIN **THREE MONTHS** FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS NOTICE OR THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED. **THIS STATUTORY PERIOD CANNOT BE EXTENDED.** SEE 35 U.S.C. 151. THE ISSUE FEE DUE INDICATED ABOVE DOES NOT REFLECT A CREDIT FOR ANY PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE IN THIS APPLICATION. IF AN ISSUE FEE HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN PAID IN THIS APPLICATION (AS SHOWN ABOVE), THE RETURN OF PART B OF THIS FORM WILL BE CONSIDERED A REQUEST TO REAPPLY THE PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE TOWARD THE ISSUE FEE NOW DUE.

HOW TO REPLY TO THIS NOTICE:

I. Review the SMALL ENTITY status shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as YES, verify your current SMALL ENTITY status:

A. If the status is the same, pay the TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above.

B. If the status above is to be removed, check box 5b on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and twice the amount of the ISSUE FEE shown above, or

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as NO:

A. Pay TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above, or

B. If applicant claimed SMALL ENTITY status before, or is now claiming SMALL ENTITY status, check box 5a on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and 1/2 the ISSUE FEE shown above.

II. PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL, or its equivalent, must be completed and returned to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) with your ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). If you are charging the fee(s) to your deposit account, section "4b" of Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal should be completed and an extra copy of the form should be submitted. If an equivalent of Part B is filed, a request to reapply a previously paid issue fee must be clearly made, and delays in processing may occur due to the difficulty in recognizing the paper as an equivalent of Part B.

III. All communications regarding this application must give the application number. Please direct all communications prior to issuance to Mail Stop ISSUE FEE unless advised to the contrary.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Utility patents issuing on applications filed on or after Dec. 12, 1980 may require payment of maintenance fees. It is patentee's responsibility to ensure timely payment of maintenance fees when due.

PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL

Complete and send this form, together with applicable fee(s), to: Mail **Mail Stop ISSUE FEE**
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
 or Fax **(571)-273-2885**

INSTRUCTIONS: This form should be used for transmitting the ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). Blocks 1 through 5 should be completed where appropriate. All further correspondence including the Patent, advance orders and notification of maintenance fees will be mailed to the current correspondence address as indicated unless corrected below or directed otherwise in Block 1, by (a) specifying a new correspondence address; and/or (b) indicating a separate "FEE ADDRESS" for maintenance fee notifications.

CURRENT CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS (Note: Use Block 1 for any change of address)

Note: A certificate of mailing can only be used for domestic mailings of the Fee(s) Transmittal. This certificate cannot be used for any other accompanying papers. Each additional paper, such as an assignment or formal drawing, must have its own certificate of mailing or transmission.

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Certificate of Mailing or Transmission

I hereby certify that this Fee(s) Transmittal is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage for first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Mail Stop ISSUE FEE address above, or being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO (571) 273-2885, on the date indicated below.

| |
|--------------------|
| (Depositor's name) |
| (Signature) |
| (Date) |

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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TITLE OF INVENTION: PANELS COMPRISING INTERLOCKING SNAP-IN PROFILES

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| EXAMINER | ART UNIT | CLASS-SUBCLASS |
|-------------------|----------|----------------|
| FIGUEROA, ADRIANA | 3633 | 052-782100 |

1. Change of correspondence address or indication of "Fee Address" (37 CFR 1.363).

- ☐ Change of correspondence address (or Change of Correspondence Address form PTO/SB/122) attached.
☐ "Fee Address" indication (or "Fee Address" Indication form PTO/SB/47; Rev 03-02 or more recent) attached. **Use of a Customer Number is required.**

2. For printing on the patent front page, list

- (1) the names of up to 3 registered patent attorneys or agents OR, alternatively, 1 _____
 (2) the name of a single firm (having as a member a registered attorney or agent) and the names of up to 2 registered patent attorneys or agents. If no name is listed, no name will be printed. 2 _____
 3 _____

3. ASSIGNEE NAME AND RESIDENCE DATA TO BE PRINTED ON THE PATENT (print or type)

PLEASE NOTE: Unless an assignee is identified below, no assignee data will appear on the patent. If an assignee is identified below, the document has been filed for recordation as set forth in 37 CFR 3.11. Completion of this form is NOT a substitute for filing an assignment.

(A) NAME OF ASSIGNEE

(B) RESIDENCE: (CITY AND STATE OR COUNTRY)

Please check the appropriate assignee category or categories (will not be printed on the patent): ☐ Individual ☐ Corporation or other private group entity ☐ Government

4a. The following fee(s) are submitted:

- ☐ Issue Fee
☐ Publication Fee (No small entity discount permitted)
☐ Advance Order - # of Copies _____

4b. Payment of Fee(s): (Please first reapply any previously paid issue fee shown above)

- ☐ A check is enclosed.
☐ Payment by credit card. Form PTO-2038 is attached.
☐ The Director is hereby authorized to charge the required fee(s), any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number _____ (enclose an extra copy of this form).

5. **Change in Entity Status** (from status indicated above)

- ☐ a. Applicant claims SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27. ☐ b. Applicant is no longer claiming SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27(g)(2).

NOTE: The Issue Fee and Publication Fee (if required) will not be accepted from anyone other than the applicant; a registered attorney or agent; or the assignee or other party in interest as shown by the records of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Authorized Signature _____ Date _____
 Typed or printed name _____ Registration No. _____

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.311. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.**

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Determination of Patent Term Adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154 (b) (application filed on or after May 29, 2000)

The Patent Term Adjustment to date is 25 day(s). If the issue fee is paid on the date that is three months after the mailing date of this notice and the patent issues on the Tuesday before the date that is 28 weeks (six and a half months) after the mailing date of this notice, the Patent Term Adjustment will be 25 day(s).

If a Continued Prosecution Application (CPA) was filed in the above-identified application, the filing date that determines Patent Term Adjustment is the filing date of the most recent CPA.

Applicant will be able to obtain more detailed information by accessing the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) WEB site (<http://pair.uspto.gov>).

Any questions regarding the Patent Term Extension or Adjustment determination should be directed to the Office of Patent Legal Administration at (571)-272-7702. Questions relating to issue and publication fee payments should be directed to the Customer Service Center of the Office of Patent Publication at 1-(888)-786-0101 or (571)-272-4200.

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/561,106

Examiner

ADRIANA FIGUEROA

Applicant(s)

KNAUSEDER, FRANZ

Art Unit

3633

- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 4/22/2009.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 26-29, 31-35, 37-51.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

/ADRIANA FIGUEROA/
Examiner, Art Unit 3633
7/14/2009

AFTER FINAL AMENDMENT

1. The proposed amendment filed after the appeal brief on 02/27/2009 has been entered and an additional amendment to these claims has been performed by the following Examiner's Amendment.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. David Hanson on 7/14/2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the claims:

Claim 26,

A structure comprising of at least first, second and third identical boards having planar surfaces and laterally mounted locking elements along a first common joint, said locking elements being wedge-shaped and having surfaces a width relative to the first common joint that decrease entirely along the joint length of the boards in a linear manner or increase entirely along the joint-length of the boards in a linear manner, wherein the locking elements are made in such a way that, simultaneously, by displacing the first board relative to the second board along a the first common joint, the first board can be connected with the second board in a positive fit along the first

common connecting joint, both in a perpendicular direction relative to the planar surface of the board, as well as in a parallel direction relative to the planar surface of the board, and, at the same time, in a perpendicular direction relative to the first common joint, and the first board can be connected with the third board in a positive fit along a second common connecting joint, at least in a perpendicular direction relative to the surface of the board.

Claim 29,

Boards having laterally mounted locking elements with which two boards can be connected with each other laterally in an adhesive- free manner by positive fit, said boards having planar surfaces and laterally mounted locking elements along a first common joint, said locking elements being wedge-shaped and having ~~surfaces~~ a width relative to the first common joint that decrease entirely along the ~~joint length of the boards~~ joint length of the boards in a linear manner or increase entirely along the ~~joint length of the boards~~ in a linear manner, wherein the locking elements are made in such a manner, that there is an initial position into which the boards can exclusively be brought by lowering in a vertical direction, wherein a the first common joint is formed between the boards in which a play occurs, and there is a final position reached by displacing the first board relative to the second board along a the first common joint in which the boards are interlocked by positive fit in a vertical direction and in which no play occurs at the first common joint and wherein the panels may be connected with each other in an adhesive-free manner.

Claim 46,

A method for connecting at least first, second and third boards having planar surfaces with laterally mounted locking elements, said locking elements being wedge-shaped and having a width relative to a first common joint that decrease entirely along the length of the boards in a linear manner or increase entirely along the length of the boards in a linear manner, in particular of boards comprising the steps of: displacing the first board relative to the second board along ~~a~~ the first common connecting joint, wherein simultaneously the first board being connected with the second board in a positive fit along the first common connecting joint, both in a perpendicular direction relative to the planar surface of the board, and in a parallel direction relative to the surface of the board, and, at the same time, in a perpendicular direction relative to the first common connecting joint, and the first board being connected with the third board in a positive fit along a second common connecting joint, at least in a perpendicular direction relative to the planar surface of the board.

Claim 49,

A method for connecting at least first and second boards with laterally mounted locking elements, said locking elements being wedge-shaped and having a width relative to a first common joint that decrease entirely along the length of the boards in a linear manner or increase entirely along the length of the boards in a linear manner, wherein two of the boards being connected laterally by positive fit in an adhesive-free manner, comprising the following steps:

bringing the boards into an initial position, in particular, exclusively by lowering in a vertical direction, wherein ~~a~~ the common joint is formed between the boards in which a play occurs, and bringing the boards into a final position, in which the boards are interlocked in a vertical direction by positive fit, and in which no play occurs at the first common joint and the panels are connected in an adhesive-free manner.

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the prior art of Konzelmann discloses boards having locking elements being wedge-shaped, but does not disclose a board having a wedge shape having a width relative to the first common joint that decreases entirely along the length of the boards or increase entirely along the length of the boards in a linear manner.

The prior art of McBurney discloses boards having locking elements being wedge-shaped, but does not disclose that the first board can be connected with the second board in a positive fit along the first common connecting joint. The positive fit has been disclosed as a connection in a perpendicular direction relative to the surface of the boards and in a parallel direction relative to the surface of the boards and at the same time perpendicular relative to the common connecting joint. Examiner interpreted "positive fit" as an interlocking connection between the boards and not only the boards resting on top of each other as disclosed by McBurney. Also, the boards of McBurney are used to create refractory blocks to use in building furnace tanks and not to be used as floor boards.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ADRIANA FIGUEROA whose telephone number is (571)272-8281. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 7:30 AM - 6 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Glessner can be reached on (571)272-6843. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/ADRIANA FIGUEROA/

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Examiner, Art Unit 3633

07/14/2009

/Brian E. Glessner/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3633